



Regional Emergency Medical Organization

Office of the Medical Director

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REMAC ADVISORY 2019-02

Re: Medication Shortages (Replaces 2018-01)

Effective Date: Current

EMS continues to face series of medications shortages. Federal and State authorities are working to address this issue, but there will be ongoing problems that will need to be managed on a local basis. The REMAC and REMO will assist as needed with operational questions including potential medication substitutions, alternative sources or other ideas.

To remain operationally sound, agencies may review medication usage, modify their formularies, and reduce quantities based on historical usage patterns. Medication quantities may be reduced and medication concentrations may be changed as needed. No medication substitutions may be made without the approval of the Medical Advisory Committee.

Agency ALS Coordinators must notify REMO with any changes to the approved Regional formulary. All Controlled Substance formulary changes must be approved by the DOH.

Some immediate shortages:

Dexamethasone may be only available in alternative vial sizes and concentrations. Some hospitals may be substituting 4mg/1ml 2ml vials for 10mg/1ml 1ml vials as on regional restocking agreement.

Solution: Dose of Dexamethasone 8mg IV or IM may be substituted for 10mg IV or IM. Please be certain to train staff about the medication change.

Amiodarone may be unavailable.

Solution: Substitute Lidocaine as a ventricular antiarrhythmic.

Sodium bicarbonate may not be available.

Solution: None. Consider use of remaining stock carefully.